

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Differences in Stress Levels between Kuwaiti Fathers and Mothers of Children with Specific Learning Disabilities

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Research literature indicates that parents of children with disabilities have different effects from and perceptions of their children's disabilities. Evidence also suggests that mothers and fathers experience different effects from their child's disabilities. The purpose of this study was to examine differences in stress levels between Kuwaiti fathers and mothers about their children with specific learning disabilities (SLD). The research utilized a descriptive survey design that employed a mixed methodology of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. A sample size of 182 parents comprised of 91 fathers and 91 mothers participated in the study. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the participants and their children with SLD. Descriptive statistics were also used to demonstrate participants' responses toward the open-ended questions that were included in the qualitative section, while the t-test and repeated-measured MANOVA were used to examine the differences in stress levels between the Kuwaiti parents in the quantitative section.

The outcome of the research revealed that there were significant differences in overall stress levels between Kuwaiti fathers and mothers about their children with SLD. The findings of this study showed that overall mothers have significantly higher stress levels than fathers, and they have higher stress levels specifically about the child's characteristics (Child Domain) and also the parents' characteristics (Parent Domain) as well.

The researcher suggests that ministries of education and ministries of health in Kuwait and the Gulf Area need to provide effective programs that improve the quality of life of parents of children with disabilities and meet the needs of children with disabilities and their families. Parents of children with disabilities need governmental and other program models that support their efforts on behalf of their children with disabilities and decrease the unhealthy stress levels that these parents might experience.